

In the Claims

~~Please cancel claims 1-6.~~

Please add new claims 7-24 as follows (for the Examiner's convenience, all of the claims pending after entry of this Amendment are presented below):

7. (New) An isolated nucleic acid molecule comprising the nucleotide sequence set forth in SEQ ID NOs:19 or 37.

8. (New) An isolated nucleic acid molecule comprising a fragment of the nucleotide sequence set forth in SEQ ID NOs:19 or 37, wherein the fragment comprises at least 10 nucleotides.

9. (New) An isolated nucleic acid molecule encoding a polypeptide comprising the amino acid sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:1.

10. (New) An isolated nucleic acid molecule which encodes a naturally occurring allelic variant of a polypeptide comprising the amino acid sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:1.

11. (New) An isolated nucleic acid molecule which encodes a fragment of a polypeptide comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1, wherein the fragment comprises at least 5 contiguous amino acid residues of the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1.

12. (New) An isolated nucleic acid molecule which hybridizes to the nucleic acid molecule of any one of claims 7, 8, 9, 10, or 11 under stringent conditions.

13. (New) An isolated nucleic acid molecule comprising a nucleotide sequence which is complementary to the nucleotide sequence of the nucleic acid molecule of any one of claims 7, 8, 9, 10, or 11.

14. (New) An isolated nucleic acid molecule comprising the nucleic acid molecule of any one of claims 7, 8, 9, 10, or 11, and a nucleotide sequence encoding a heterologous polypeptide.

15. (New) An isolated nucleic acid molecule of claims 7, 8, 9, 10, or 11, wherein said nucleic acid molecule is operably linked to at least one expression control sequence.

16. (New) A process for producing a protein encoded by the nucleic acid molecule of claim 15, which comprises:

- (a) growing a culture of a host cell transformed with a vector comprising the polynucleotide of claim 15 in a suitable culture medium; and
- (b) purifying said protein from the culture.

17. (New) A vector comprising the nucleic acid molecule of any one of claims 7, 8, 9, 10, or 11.

18. (New) The vector of claim 17, which is an expression vector.

19. (New) A host cell transfected with the expression vector of claim 17.

20. (New) An isolated polypeptide selected from the group consisting of:

- a) a fragment of a polypeptide comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1, wherein the fragment comprises at least 5 contiguous amino acids of SEQ ID NO:1; and
- b) a naturally occurring allelic variant of a polypeptide comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1, wherein the polypeptide is encoded by a nucleic acid molecule which hybridizes to a nucleic acid molecule consisting of SEQ ID NOs:19 or 37 under stringent conditions.

21. (New) The polypeptide of claim 20 comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1.

22. (New) The polypeptide of claim 21, further comprising heterologous amino acid sequences.

23. (New) An antibody which selectively binds to a polypeptide of claim 20.